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The Kwoma are a mountain-dwelling people. Except for the southeastern slope of Ambunti Mountain, site of the Ambunti Police Post,[1] they control the entire segment of the Peilungua Range which lies northwest of the Sepik. The territory they claim also includes enough of the sago swamps at the foot of these mountains to provide them with more than enough of the sago flour which is a staple in their diet. They are surrounded by swamp and river tribes. Living in the sago swamp somewhat to the northwest are the Amiki and Sowal people, and on a little group of hills to the northeast, separated by the swamp from the main range, live a half-dozen households who call themselves Yelagu. The Malu, Yambon, and Yessan, the river neighbors of the Kwoma, are linguistically and culturally distinct from the mountain people. When they converse with each other, each speaks his own language, which the other understands.

The Kwoma tribe consists of four subtribes: the Tangwishamp, the Urumbanj, the Koriasi, and the Hongwam.[2] Their territories are contiguous. The Hongwam, who dwell nearest Ambunti, were the group from which nearly all the data here presented were gathered, only a brief trip being made to the other three subtribes. These four subtribes, although speaking the same language and bound by not a few ties of trade and intermarriage, are distinct social entities and are not above carrying on head-hunting raids against one another.[3] More frequently, however, they will band to-

[1] While the fieldwork on which this report is based was being carried on, Ambunti was still a functioning administrative post. Since then this station has been moved to Marui, approximately thirty-five miles downstream, to facilitate communication with the District headquarters at Wewak.

[2] The terms "tribe" and "subtribe" have been adopted here although it might be objected that, since there is no political organization which unites these four groups, it is improper to call the Kwoma a tribe.

[3]

Native Name	*Name Appearing on Maps and in Australian Record Books*	*Population*
Hongwam	Waskuk—Bangus	374
Koriyasi	Chissaraman (Shasherman)	116
Urumbanj	Urumbans (Urumbanji)	108
Tangwishamp	Tangunjambi (Taunjambi)	*circa* 300

Hongwam is referred to as Washkuk by M. Mead in *Sex and Temperament* and in "The Mountain Arapesh: I. An Importing Culture," *Anthro-*

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father's *friends*.[17] His parents teach him that these children are his *friends*. He is told that he can visit and play with these children without fear of sorcery, and that he should be nice to them when they come to visit him.

A child is taught to fear and avoid non-relatives,[18] as has already been mentioned in connection with sorcery. He is also warned that they are dangerous for reasons other than sorcery. Non-relatives, he is told, not only do not help and protect him as his relatives do, but may even have little compunction about hurting him. In addition to warnings, the child receives many object lessons from the bitter exchanges of insults and threats of violence which occur not infrequently between the adults of the hamlet and those not related to them. He learns, on the other hand, that non-relatives belong to the same subtribe as his own family and that therefore there is a limit to their danger. He comes to understand that they and his relatives have a considerable community of interest; that they will stand together against aggression from outside; that they participate jointly in ceremonies and court meetings; and, finally, that a complicated web of kinship bonds interlaces the whole subtribe and holds it together. A boy learns the names of non-relatives. If he meets one of them he may exchange a brief greeting and gossip for a moment, but, in contrast to a meeting with a relative, he is reserved and anxious. He never enters the house of a non-relative unless accompanied by an older person, and seldom plays with unrelated children.

A child is taught that foreigners[19] are even more to be feared than non-relatives. Not only will they sorcerize him without shame, but they have little respect for his life or limb. He is told stories of head-hunting raids, and most Kwoma children actually experience a raid in which some acquaintance or relative is killed and decapitated by a group of foreigners seeking prestige.

[17] A ceremonial pseudo-kin relationship established at the time of initiation to adulthood.

[18] Unrelated members of the subtribe.

[19] A member of another subtribe who is not a relative by marriage.

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gether for raids against threatened or actual encroachments by non-Kwoma peoples.

Each subtribe is divided into several hamlets, most of which are clustered about a "house tamberan" or men's ceremonial lodge. A hamlet is usually named after its house tamberan. The arrangement of dwellings in a hamlet is determined by hereditary ownership of land and also by the fact that level sites are very few, owing to the precipitous nature of the mountain slopes.

The patrilineal sib is the primary descent group among the Kwoma. Although all the adult males of a hamlet are members of the same sib, the hamlets of a given sib are not necessarily contiguous, i.e., the descent groups are not completely localized. All the members of a sib theoretically descend from a common totem ancestor. Thus the three sibs of Hongwam subtribe are the *Wanyi*, who descend from a pig, the *Hayamakwo*, who descend from a great fish hawk, and the *Tug*, who descend from the sago palm. Each of these sibs has a great many subsidiary totems, some of which are claimed by more than one sib. These lesser totems are variously identified with birds, reptiles, fish, trees, plants, and parts of the human body.

Each sib is divided into lineages each of whose component families claims descent from a legendary hero. The men of a lineage usually build their dwellings in a cluster which forms part of a hamlet. A lineage is composed of several family lines whose members descend from a common grandfather. The men of a single family line also build their houses near one another. The smallest unit and the most compact is that formed by the sons of a father.

Thus a man remembers four ancestors in the male line: his father, his grandfather, a culture hero who is thought to have been his great grandfather, and, finally, his totem ancestor who lived—according to Kwoma myth—back at the

[113] *pological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XXXVI, Pt. III. The maps above referred to are: *Map of Sepik District* compiled by the Department of Lands and Mines, Rabaul, October, 1935, and *Sketch Map of Portion of Sepik District*, Sydney, 1935, Oil Search Ltd. Geological Survey.

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and son, form a gardening group who coöperate to raise vegetables. The coöperative work group is composed of a man who needs help in performing some major task, such as clearing a garden site or building a house, and those of his relatives who are willing to help him in return for the feast which he and his wife must provide for them. A larger co-operative work group consisting of men from all the hamlets of the subtribe, builds a house tamberan; and the men and women of the hamlet that is benefited provide the feast. The women of a hamlet unite in informal groups to carry on what little fishing is done.

The trading group meets on appointed days once or twice a week. It is composed of women from one or more hamlets in the sib who bring sacks of sago flour, their male relatives who go to protect them and to gossip, and men and women from the river tribes who bring fish.

Warfare, too, is carried out by a definitely constituted group. The raiding party consists of adolescent and adult males from one or more subtribes who unite for a head-hunting expedition. The whole subtribe, including women and children, is mobilized to greet the returning warriors and celebrate a victory dance and hold a feast.

Kwoma culture specifies who shall perform the necessary legal functions of the tribe. The final authority in disputes between members of different hamlets in the subtribe is a court held at a neutral house tamberan and attended by adolescent and adult males from the whole subtribe. Disputes between subtribes are settled by a court of the men of both tribes meeting on neutral territory. In none of these courts are there legal specialists; each man's opinion is valued in accordance with his prestige in the community.

Religious activities are performed by the yam cult. This cult is divided into three sections: *Yenama*, *Minjama*, and *Nokwi*. Every Kwoma boy in the subtribe is elected during adolescence to either *Yenama* or *Minjama*; young men of promise are inducted into both sections. *Nokwi*, the highest stage of the cult, receives only men who are of high prestige and who have taken a head.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 14]

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cumstances this is the case, but a dispute over property, the abduction or rape of a woman, or a head-hunting murder may break off these safe relations. Visiting then takes place only at the risk of one's life, until the matter can be settled. Finally a foreigner may sometimes steal, trespass, or encroach upon Kwoma land.

Safe relations with another tribe are reëstablished after a dispute by means of an intertribal court. After the heat of a dispute has cooled,[49] the adult males of the two tribes arrange by gongs to meet at an appointed place on neutral territory. They all carry daggers and spears to be prepared for treachery and to give force to their arguments. The two groups face one another, and a spokesman advances from each in turn to present the case of his tribe. Each spokesman accentuates his speech by slapping a flat board on the ground. Often the two representatives stand close to each other, chests out and eyes flashing, and jab bone daggers over one another's shoulder. Just as in the intratribal court, it is important not to flinch, so only the most courageous of the tribesmen act as spokesmen. Such courts are most commonly held to settle territorial disputes, to arrange the payment of a bride-price for an abducted girl, or to decide on a wergild for a head-hunting murder.

Open warfare between New Guinea tribes is infrequent, and the Kwoma are no exception. A war was waged in the time of the grandfathers of living informants. It began with a territorial dispute with the people who inhabited part of the area that the Kwoma now occupy. After a prolonged series of raids and counterraids, the Kwoma exterminated all but a small remnant of the enemy, who fled to another location. During the war, the Kwoma captured the leader of the enemy. They dragged him to one of their house tamberans and trussed him to the center pole. Then they held a dance around him, jabbed spears into him, spat at him, and otherwise tortured him. Finally they killed him, cut him up like a

[49] Informants said that it was of no advantage to hold a court when "bellies were hot with anger," as it would probably end in a fight.

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Finally they killed him, cut him up like a
727 pig, and made soup of him. Only the adult males were allowed
[266] to eat the soup,[80] and it was believed that they were thus made such brave fighters that they were able to conquer their enemies.

• 726 The head-hunting raid provides the most frequently em-
[721] ployed means of expressing aggression toward a foreigner. Such a raid is planned in advance, and allies are often recruited from friendly neighboring tribes. A careful itinerary is drawn up, and an unsuspecting and weak hamlet is chosen for attack. The men meet before setting out on the raid to eat a ceremonial soup. They travel under cover of darkness, arranging to arrive at their destination just before dawn. Then the men quietly surround an outlying dwelling and stand with spears poised while two of the boldest of the attackers creep toward the house. When they reach the entrance they let out a blood-curdling scream and kick the door down. The other attackers join in the shouting and in spearing the dazed occupants as they rush from the dwelling. When the attackers have killed the whole household, they rush to other houses in the hamlet, hoping to catch and kill some inhabitants who have not awakened at the outcry and
727 fled. Then they return and behead the corpses with a bamboo knife. They carry the heads home. When they near their own tribe, they set up a victorious shout and dance into their hamlet, holding their trophies by the ear in their teeth. Then follows a victory dance which lasts for several days and nights.

721 A man is impelled to go on a head-hunting raid to gain
554 prestige, as well as to avenge himself on a foreigner. No man
[794] is eligible to join *Nokwei*, the highest grade of the yam cult, until he has taken a head. Until he belongs to *Nokwei* he cannot plant yams, nor is he considered to be a man of importance in the community. It is the *Nokwei* members who have the greatest weight at the court sessions. Furthermore, a man

[829] [80] This is the only occasion in the memory of informants that the Kwoma had practiced cannibalism. They showed disgust and contempt for those tribes who ate human flesh and betrayed some shame in reporting the above incident.

October 25, 1936.

101 619 Last night Kum and War visited and we talked about the political divisions of the tribe. They said that the Waskuk and Bangus together were called Hongwam, and that Urambanj, Tangwishamp and Koriasi together were another [197] group called kuome.* These all speak the same language, so they said, and 101 inhabit adjacent mountains. Other adjacent tribes are the Yambon on the river to the south; the Yelagu, one day's walk to the east; and the Numau, 173 three days north-west; and the Kamburu, five days north-west. Before the 721 whites came, they made raids on all of these people to kill them for prestige. 726A large number of them would creep up on a hamlet at night, surround it, and fall on the sleeping inmates with much yelling and shouting. They would kill only those who were near at hand; those who escaped were not followed. [411] They used spears for weapons. Kum and War would not admit they either took [27] heads or were cannibals. The former was the custom of the river people; the [266] latter they had heard of being done on the Markam river.

Hamlets, house tamberans and their history.

173 The Ngaya occupied the present site of Ambunti--the mountains and the adjacent sago swamp. At the time of the grandfathers of the present generation, they were bow and arrow people who killed and ate the Hongwam people. Later when they went to work they would strap pigskin shields to their backs [648] and breasts to protect themselves. Finally the Hongwam called together the Malu, Yambon, Yasi, Nowel, Avatip Urambanj, and Koriasi and they wiped out the Ngaya. A few Ngaya ran away and were absorbed into the people living at Yelagu, but the rest were killed. One reason for getting rid of the Ngaya was that the Hongwam had no sago and were living on the sap of the breadfruit tree.

* Probably Kwoma

703 A homicide has the privilege of wearing cuscus fur on his head as an
237 everyday ornament and the plumes of several kinds of birds (bird of paradise
was one kind) during the singsing. A man who had killed two men would wear
the plumes of two birds at once. Women are forbidden to eat the flesh of
[262] these birds. Both Kum and War were homicides; each had killed an Urambanj.
After admitting this, they hastened to add that these raids were retaliation
for raids that the Urambanj had made on them and that the latter had started it.

726 They also have the usual New Guinea grievance battle where the sides line
up, shout at each other from a distance, and throw spears until blood is
drawn and then resume friendly relations.

462 We also have collected some scattered information on the division of
labor by sex. Women get water and firewood, catch fish, make bags and do
the cooking. Men hunt, and wash sago (women help in the preliminaries of
washing sago). Both sexes garden. It is taboo for a man or his father
[262] or mother to eat a yam that he has planted or a pig that he has killed.
[274] Women can chew betel, but smoking is a man's privilege.
[502]

796 [534] sized trunk of a tree hollowed out and open at both ends. It is hung bottom up in the water and struck with a long heavy post wielded by two men.

The outline of another similar pit which has been filled in was seen beside the one now in use. This I was told had leaked badly. The new one has to be filled from any of several bamboo containers stuck under the 'banif' quite often.

[346] [778] In the house tamberan there is the same altar set up in the center with a small amount of shell money, two stubby bamboo flutes, and a wooden [538] [532] trumpet on top. Above it rises a 3' carved wooden figure of a woman. This is the woman for whom the ceremony is held. There is also a secondary [614] figure under the water drum less important than the one on the altar. These two are sugiliwas of the tug sib (Bangua).

Between 30 and 40 men are present when we arrive in the early afternoon. [535] They are singing and half-walking, half-dancing around the water gong [533] counter-clockwise. The gong keeps up a steady boom-boom-boom with few [534] interruptions even when new beaters relieve those who are tired. The men drop out from time to time to smoke or to chat so that no more than half are dancing while we are there. Later on in the evening we are told this is not so; everyone is dancing almost continuously. But the sun was hot and there were still many men to come, so it was being taken easily. Men from all of the Honuwem sibs are present and also a few men of Koriasi and [703] Koriasi Tangwishamp. Only four of these were "savi talks". These four, [178] however, wore the regalia of a homicide which seems to point to the fact [554] that killing for prestige still goes on in spite of government prohibitions. [726] These men may have won their letter in the prearranged fight with a small hamlet of Koriasi about three years ago. Six of the latter, four of them women and children, were killed then. (We haven't got this story straight yet for we have only recently stumbled on it).

123 some sort of fearful retaliation. I can't quite sense it. It comes to
156 consciousness in a feeling that I won't be liked, and I have an over-
[626] whelming desire to be liked by everyone. This sanction of the mores by direct physical punishment is also quite foreign to me in a cultural sense, and it is very difficult for me to accept it in this as well as the unconscious psychological sense. This is a point on personality and culture or the personality of culture.

123 I sat around at the house tamberan for a while. Wof came down. Mar,
● 726 Mes, Owiyap and May were there. War began talking to Mes in a low tone. He said something about my musket and Yelagu. I guessed what it was, and later Owiyap told me that War was suggesting that May get the musket and go with him and wipe out the Yelagu people. Mes and Mar reacted to this by getting very excited and dancing up and down in the house tamberan. In the middle of this talk Chinuwe called out that there was somebody in my house stealing something. The house boys and I ran up, but it turned out to be a dog and Chinuwe's imagination. I told Owiyap and War that this musket business could not be, for word would get to the police about it, and I would be hanged along with the rest of them. If War wanted to shoot them with a spear, it was his business.

126 April 14, 1937. This morning Yafomongwie, Kwalump, Ambe, Evelas, and
721 War came up ornamented, and I took a picture. Kwalump and Kwonai asked me
726 whether I would tell the police if they went on a head-hunting raid. I
[123] told them no, that it was their business. May told me that the time was set for tomorrow morning, that they were making soup now. Men were going by the house all morning to pull Memk's canoe. In the afternoon they came back and feasted at Rumbima. Awe visited in the afternoon, and I got some information from him. He said he did not want to eat with the others

721 because he was afraid of sorcery. Kar came up later and asked me why I did not
726 come down. I went, and there were about 50 people there. Most of them were ornamented with black paint and mano (bird of paradise) feathers. They played ball
[123] [302] [301] [524] [123] until dark and then left. I told Kar that I would not tell the police about the raid, and he seemed upset and wanted to know who had told me about it. I answered that I had overheard War at the house tamberan, so as not to get my informers in trouble.

726 Mar and Mes told me that they were going to raid not Yelangu but Nugitema
648 (Sowal Urambanj). The former place had representatives of the Australian government, and they were afraid they would get in trouble with the police. Sowal Uranganj, however, was not yet under Australian control, and they could get away with it.

I asked them if they were going. Mar said "No, mi fraid long kiop mi no laik hang im up. Maski, mi stop alasaim mari. Mi no man. Mi mari dasol. Mi stop mari olataim. Maski put im bilas bilong biruwa." (No, I'm afraid of the Australian patrol officer. I don't want to be hung. Never mind, I will be a woman the rest of my life. Never mind weaning the symbols of manhood.) He showed considerable affect during this speech as if he were making quite a sacrifice by deciding not to go. He and Mes both asked me to furnish alibis for them in case of trouble. Mar said that perhaps later they would go to Yelangu and clean it up, but that this was a different affair, War's idea, but that if this came to pass, he was going to tell the police because his garden would be useless.

726 They reported that now they were waiting for men from Urambanj, Tangwishamp,
[501] Koriasi, and Yambon. War had made soup at his house. They were planning to go by canoe, to leave that night and skirt the Kwoma mountains. They would approach at night, single out one house tamberan and surround a house silently. At number one fowl (dawn), the leader would approach the house and break the fence (evidently the Sowal Urambanj's have palisades).

726 As the occupants of the house rushed out, he would spear them. Those who
[411] escaped his spear would rush into the spears of the men surrounding the
[714] house. (They all would carry three spears and shields and be ornamented.) Then, if the alarm had not been spread, they would go to another house and continue until all the people belonging to this house tamberan were either killed or
[727] had fled. Then they would burn the house tamberan and leave. Only heads of the handsome adult men would be taken (Yambons take all heads.) The Soual Urembanja of the other house tamberans would not help but would run away as soon as the alarm was given.

April 15, 1937. The raiders have not started. They fear treachery because no one came from Tangwishamp. They have all gone to Wenya to talk things over. Mar came back with the news that the raid was all off--that a man had come from Tangwishamp saying that the water had gone down so that the creek which they had planned to use was closed up. They will go later when the
[648] road is passable. I asked him if he thought that one reason why they gave it up was fear that the thought of hanging played a part in their putting off the raid. The reactions of Mar and Mas yesterday suggest it did.

124 Tofokamas came to visit this morning and has hung around all day. His wife is visiting at Wof's and Mar's. His wife is Mar's sister. Sof and another young man, ("Dr. boy") came and sat around for a while. "Dr. boy" brought up the subject of my losing things and said that the lads were innocent add that he had seen Maroh with my tobacco. After lunch they went down to Rumbimas house tamberan. Mar came in and told me that he had made an arrangement with Mowimbi and Gwonts, to get Mas's sister Uha down to a certain place to catch fish. Mar is to meet them there and take Uha to his garden house. He will come back in the late afternoon. He asked me not to tell Mas, and to protect him

752 and showed little or no sympathy -- sort of "It's not my fault -- I told you to be careful. If I sympathize with you, people may think I'm to blame."

123 [562] After supper I went down to Mar's. Way's wife, two daughters, and Uga and Mar's sisters were there, sitting around the fire talking. Uga made a remark that I was too big a man (<u>hersps ma mayaka</u>) to be coming into a gathering of women. We sat for a while and exchanged pleasantries, and then I went to the house tamberan. Most of the Rumbins were there. The

123 726 talk soon turned to the raid. Voices were lowered and there was an air of excitement, particularly from Kis, Kar, and Mas. War was the ring leader. Mas told me later that Tangwishaap and Amagi had recently made a raid on Sawa Drambanj, and they were living about in the bush in small groups. They are still planning to attack. War is still after Mas to get my shotgun. Yat tried to throw me off the track by telling me they were talking about food.

123 I came back to find Wof at my house. He was very glum. Hay said he had been that way ever since <u>sunga mwai</u> at Sov's.

584 754 Owiyap said it was difficult to get a wife at Waskuk. They were not like Malu and Yambon -- that they were "poisoners true"-- even if you stared at a woman on the road, she would be likely to tell her relatives and they would make poison against you.

584 583 Mar said that his affair with Uka was put off for a couple of days -- the arrangement was that Mas would get Gwanta in exchange. Yatamiaj, Kar, Kis and War would get her bride price; Mas, Dawa and Afa would get Uka's.

Chapter IV

Case History- GWIYAP

*115 157 Gwiyap is about 14 years old, slim, good looking and intelligent. He is quite often around the house, and is willing to do odd jobs. He begged persistently for matches for about half an hour one day--he is persistent [191] even after having been refused, but not objectionably so. He has learned *115 593 and talks pidgin English quite well. He lives with his father's second 736 wife, and was brought up by her. Both of his parents died when he was young-- his mother killed in an incident with the Tangwishampo. He was carried *115 553 off by his foster mother and they went to hide in the sago swamp. His name was given him by the Malus with whom he stayed after the raid. His mother had named him Woyahokwa (the ringing of an ax).

October 18, 1936. The story of the 1928 raid.

648 726 Gwiyap was only a small child at the time and does not remember it all himself. Two police boys raped a woman while her husband and others were out in the gardens. Men returned and killed both police boys. Three white men and a good number of police boys came with muskets and sat down at the house tamberan for a long time. The Kongwan hid in the house except for a few men. Gwiyap's father carried him down to the swamp, accompanied by his 'mother'and his older brother. The police boys killed fowls, pigs, cut down coconut trees and burned the house tamberan, and shot men and women. Somehow Gwiyap's mother and brother were killed but his father escaped. Since then, when white people came, patrol officers or policemen, everyone ran into the bush.

October 20, 1936.

*115 123 Yesterday we went out to where they were planting yams. Gwiyap, who had gone the day before, came up and seemed very pleased to see us. We ate at Mirok's house, and during the meal , Gwiyap sat down beside me and